

Adult Literacy Contact Centre NEWSLETTER



May 1994

Volume 7, Number 5

A project of the Adult Basic Education Association of B.C.

"Skills Now" for Today's Jobs

The B.C. government has announced it will spend \$200 million over the next two years on a new skills training plan for high school and post-secondary students, workers and the unemployed.

The plan, called Skills Now, was announced by Premier Mike Harcourt and Skills, Training and Labour Minister Dan Miller in Vancouver on May 3, 1994.

Skills Now is described as "the government's plan to prepare more British Columbians with the skills needed for jobs in a changing economy." It is based on the Premier's Summit on Skills Development and Training of June 1993, the Strand and Fulton reports and other consultations with business, labour and educators over the past few years.

The plan has more than 30 separate initiatives. Some highlights from it are:

Linking high school to the workplace

- ❖ Increased work experience, career preparation, co-op education and apprenticeship opportunities for students.

- ❖ Expanded stay-in-school initiatives and alternate education programs, such as storefront schools, to encourage drop-outs to complete their education.

Retraining workers closer to home

- ❖ A B.C. Labour Force Development Board will be created to give business, labour, training providers and equity groups a collective voice that will provide strategic advice to government on job market and training issues.

- ❖ Establishment of 10 new Community Skill Centres in "remote, under-served communities" in B.C. to provide training and retraining for up to 10,000 workers in the first year.

- ❖ A Quick Response Training and Adjustment Program to provide short-term, part-time retraining and training courses in communities suddenly affected by job loss or new opportunities.

- ❖ Community Outreach Partnerships funding will be provided for college/community partnerships that create part-time retraining, community economic development and lifelong learning opportunities.

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From welfare to the workforce

♦ A post-secondary training for jobs initiative to provide customized training plans for people on welfare who take training programs to improve their skills. The initiative will provide tuition and other program costs, including child care.

♦ Training credits for B.C. businesses of up to \$10,000 for each new employee trained.

The government has established a provincial toll-free telephone number to answer callers' questions and provide an overview of the plan.

For further information on Skills Now, phone:
1-800-63-SKILL ☐

Newsletter Readers:

We hope to see you at our *Open House* at the Adult Literacy Contact Centre on June 16. (See story on page 3.) We are located on the 6th floor of the Standard Building at the corner of West Hastings and Richards in downtown Vancouver, just two blocks away from the Waterfront Skytrain Station. We look forward to welcoming our friends and colleagues.

— the Adult Literacy Contact Centre Staff

Workplace Education Theme of Summer Institute

B.C. practitioners still have time to apply for a summer institute on workforce education to be presented in Toronto by ABC CANADA and the Centre for Literacy in Montreal.

The second annual institute sponsored by the two agencies -- called Workforce Education: Focus on Evaluation -- will take place June 26 - 29, 1994.

The institute is "geared for people from education, government, community-based organizations, labour, and business who are involved in workplace basic skills education."

The ABC CANADA Literacy Foundation "engages nationally in literacy issues, on three fronts: a national literacy awareness program; a workplace advisory service; and support to community literacy organizations." Its main focus is workplace literacy.

The Centre for Literacy, at Dawson College in Montreal, is a resource centre and teacher-training project that "supports and promotes the advancement of literacy in the schools, the workplace, and the community through linking, training,

research and information services."

Organizers say the institute will broaden participants' understanding of workplace basic skills education issues, and provide "a practical focus on a collaborative approach to evaluation."

Those invited to attend the institute are human resource or training professionals, workplace basic skills coordinators, labour educators, government funders or policy analysts, who are responsible for coordinating, implementing or supervising workplace basic skills programs.

The institute leaders are:

♦ Mary Ellen Belfiore, an ABC CANADA associate with a special interest in second language learning and workplace education

♦ Sue Folinsbee, Workplace Consultant for ABC CANADA's Workplace Advisory Service

♦ Sheryl Gowan, Professor, Georgia State University, and Assistant Director of the Center for the Study of Workplace Literacy, Atlanta, Georgia

♦ Linda Shohet, Director, The Centre for Literacy.

Registration is limited to 30 participants. Consideration will be given to ensuring geographical representation from across Canada. (B.C.

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practitioners are encouraged to still apply.)

The deadline is May 31, 1994.

For further information, contact:

Caroline Gordon
ABC CANADA
1450 Don Mills Road
Don Mills, Ontario
M3B 2X7
Phone: (416) 442-2292
Fax: (416) 442-2293 ☐

Open House at Lower Mainland Literacy Sites

The public is welcome to take part in an informal tour of Lower Mainland literacy agencies, scheduled during the annual conference of the Canadian Library Association (CLA) in Vancouver next month.

The open house tour, organized to familiarize CLA delegates with local literacy organizations, programs and services, is offered by the Greater Vancouver Library Federation and the CLA Action for Literacy Interest Group. It will take place on:

Thursday June 16
1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

No registration is necessary for the self-guided, self-paced tour. All sites are within walking distance of the conference facilities or are accessible by public transit.

The agencies participating in the open house are:

❖ Adult Learning Disabilities Association

❖ Adult Literacy Contact Centre

❖ Carnegie Adult Learning Centre

❖ Literacy B.C.

❖ Little Mountain Neighbourhood House

❖ Native Tutoring Centre

❖ Vancouver Community College, King Edward Campus

❖ Vancouver Public Library (Central, Joe Fortes, and Mount Pleasant Branches)

❖ Westcoast English Language Centre

The 49th annual CLA conference takes place June 14 - 18, 1994 at the Vancouver Trade and Convention Centre. In conjunction with the CLA conference, the B.C. Library Association will hold "Libraries and Literacy Summit 94," a

B.C. literacy cost-shared project to develop a long-term strategy for the literacy services provided by B.C. libraries.

For further information about the open house tour, contact:

Jacqui Jones-Cox, Librarian
Capilano Branch
North Vancouver District Library
3045 Highland Boulevard
North Vancouver, B.C.
V7R 2X4
Phone: 987-4471 ☐

Adult Literacy Contact Centre Newsletter

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Vancouver, B.C. V6B 1L8
1-800-663-1293
Toll-free in B.C.
684-0624 Lower Mainland
684-8520 Fax

The Adult Literacy Contact Centre is a project of the Adult Basic Education Association of B.C. and is jointly funded by the Ministry of Skills, Training and Labour, and the National Literacy Secretariat.

The Centre welcomes receiving your literacy news by phone, fax or mail. We reserve the right to edit written submissions for the newsletter.

The newsletter is published monthly (except as noted). It is available free of charge to any individual or agency upon request.



Family Literacy/ESL Conference in Saskatoon

A family literacy and English as a Second Language conference open to participants from B.C. will be held in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, September 30 - October 1, 1994.

The conference, called "Celebrating Family and Community," will feature a range of speakers and workshops for practitioners, administrators, policy makers and business and community partners.

The conference is planned "to give participants maximum access to experts with hands-on experience in building partnerships in family literacy and language learning."

The event is co-sponsored by the Saskatchewan Literacy Network and the Saskatchewan Council of Educators of Non-English Speakers.

The conference strands are: regional approaches; cross cultural family literacy; integrated family literacy; literacy for aboriginal families; and ESL materials and advocacy.

Some of the highlights are:

- ❖ A seminar for educators and policymakers by Bob Spillman, Executive Vice-President, National Center for Family Literacy, Louisville, Kentucky, on "Why, What, and How of Family Literacy," will be telecast live via satellite to selected sites throughout the province.
- ❖ Barbara Bate, a member of the Adult Basic Education Department, University College of the Fraser Valley, Chilliwack, who does community literacy work, will give a workshop on integrated learning programs for parents and children.
- ❖ Senator Joyce Fairbairn, federal Minister with special responsibility for literacy is scheduled as the keynote speaker.

The suggested deadline for registration is September 1, 1994.

For further information, contact:

Shirley Silburt
Saskatchewan Literacy Network
Box 1520
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan
S7K 3R5
Phone: (306) 653-7368
Fax: (306) 933-6490 ☐

PACE Bursaries for Adult Learners

Applications are welcome from part-time adult learners for the Pacific Association for Continuing Education (PACE) Bursary Fund.

The PACE Bursary Fund was established in 1977 "specifically to assist part-time adult students by helping to remove financial obstacles to continuing education." Bursaries of \$100 to \$500 are awarded to adults studying part-time who are returning to formal education for upgrading in academic and/or vocational areas of study.

Adult basic education students are eligible for the awards. Last year, two of the 25 bursaries were awarded to students in the adult basic education programs at Camosun College and the University College of the Cariboo.

The deadline for applications is September 30, 1994.

For further information, contact:

Yvonne Mostert
PACE Bursary Committee
c/o Douglas College
P.O. Box 2503
New Westminster, B.C.
V3L 5B2
Phone: 527-5386
Fax: 527-5311 ☐

Call for Papers on Northern Women's Issues

A Canadian journal has issued a call for papers on topics -- including approaches to literacy training -- of concern to women living in Canada's north.

Canadian Woman Studies / les cahiers des femmes (CWS/cf) is a bilingual feminist quarterly (started in 1978) out of York University, Toronto. The summer 1994 issue will be on northern women's experiences and insights into social issues such as limited access to services; the challenge of living in isolated communities; employment equity; literacy; education and training; and health and child care. One suggested theme is, "Breaking the illiteracy cycle: innovative approaches to literacy training in the north."

"The north" refers to the Yukon, Northwest Territories, Nunavut, the Gaspé and other northern communities, including B.C.'s. The *CWS/cf* calls women of these regions "dynamic and hardworking," with challenges "different from those of women in other parts of Canada."

Submissions may be in the form of essays, research reports, poetry, cartoons, drawings, artwork and true stories.

The deadline for submissions is June 30, 1994.

For further information, contact:

Canadian Woman Studies
212 Founders College
York University
4700 Keele Street
North York, Ontario
M3J 1P3
Phone: (416) 736-5356
Fax: (416) 736-5700 □

Literacy Foundation Offers 1994 Grants

Non-profit community literacy groups are invited to apply for 1994 grants of up to \$5,000 from the Canadian Give the Gift of Literacy Foundation.

The Foundation is an initiative of the Book and Periodical Council. Its goals are "to make adult literacy a high-profile issue and to help non-profit literacy groups develop materials for adult learners and their teachers." The Foundation is supported by readers, writers, editors, publishers, booksellers, librarians, book distributors and book manufacturers.

There are two types of grants for 1994:

Seed Grants of up to \$2,500 for new projects to develop an idea, perform a needs assessment, and create a

working sample of a project.

Production Grants of up to \$5,000 for the completion of project materials for adult learners and their teachers. For this grant, a working sample must be included with the application.

The deadline for applications is June 30, 1994.

For further information, contact:

Donna Lunau, Chairperson
Grants Committee
Canadian Give the Gift of Literacy
Foundation
35 Spadina Road
Toronto, Ontario
M5R 2S9
Phone: (416) 975-9366
Fax: (416) 975-1839 □

Math Help in Prince George Summer School

The Prince George Dyslexia Support Society still has space available for parents, students and tutors in the mathematics sections of its sixth annual Multisensory Learning Summer School.

The summer school is a program of the Society's Dyslexia Resource Centre. The Society's mandate is "to provide information, education and support to dyslexics, their

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families, educators, and the general public." The Dyslexic Resource Centre sponsors workshops, information meetings and support group discussions.

Space is still available in:

♦ Math with Manipulatives - "for those who want to work with adults with learning disabilities, or with those who have difficulty in math" and;

♦ individual lessons for adults facing difficulty in language and math.

Math with Manipulatives is "ten days of intensive training for teachers, tutors, and parents in alternative teaching techniques specifically for students who have difficulty with math in a conventional classroom. It is described as "a multisensory method of learning math."

The summer school takes place from August 8 - 19, 1994 at the College of New Caledonia in Prince George.

For more information, contact:

Susan Keen
Dyslexia Resource Centre
Coordinator
The Prince George Dyslexia Support Society
104 - 490 Quebec Street
Prince George, B.C.
V2L 5N5
Phone: 564-8011 ☐

NEW RESOURCES

Suspended in a Web of Relationships: Collaborative Ethnographic Evaluation

Lives of Change: An Ethnographic Evaluation of Two Learner Centred Literacy Programs

These complementary reports, released last month in a ceremony at Vancouver City Hall, are the products of a demonstration project, funded by the National Literacy Secretariat. The project was conducted as a collaborative, ethnographic evaluation of the process of learner-centered education in two B.C. adult literacy programs.

The purpose of the project was "to create and demonstrate constructive ways of asking questions about program effectiveness and goals." The programs evaluated were the adult literacy program of the Invergarry Learning Centre in Surrey, B.C., a multi-program learning centre funded by the Surrey School Board; and the Vancouver Municipal Workplace Language Program (VMWLP), a multi-site workplace literacy program offered to employees of the City of Vancouver.

In both programs, a majority of students are developing listening and speaking skills in English as they work alongside native English speaking students.

The project took over three years to complete and involved the participation of a research team, a national advisory committee, and instructors, students, volunteers, and staff at the two programs. The research team was composed of university graduate students, a research liaison from each of the programs, and two co-principal investigators: Hanna Arlene Fingeret, Executive Director, Literacy South, Durham, North Carolina; and Allison Tom, Assistant Professor, Department of Administrative, Adult and Higher Education, University of B.C.

The research was undertaken using ethnographic methods of evaluation from an anthropological perspective. (The researchers define ethnographic analysis as "the process of making meaning from experiences in the field and the notes written about them." An anthropological perspective entails "a focus on culture" and an emphasis on balance between the perspectives of "insiders" and

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"outsiders.") *Suspended in a Web of Relationships* documents the process of carrying out this type of research as a team, to address educational issues.

Lives of Change provides an evaluation of the learner-centered, writing-based literacy programs at Invergarry and VMWLP. The evaluation demonstrates how the development of new literacy and language skills and abilities affects life in the classroom, within the family, on the job and in the community.

The report also documents the ways in which culturally-related attitudes toward authority, orientation to individual achievement, and assumptions about literacy and power create patterns of tension in the working relationships among students, instructors, administrators, and volunteers. The report then explores how these tensions are resolved in learner-centered literacy education through the process of negotiation between instructors and students as they create new ways of working together.

For example, one of the conclusions is that, "The fundamental value of independence and personal power at Invergarry and VMWLP is a cultural, gender-related issue...The values and

beliefs that underlie learner-centered work are predominantly Western.... [Learners'] participation in the process of learning to make decisions about their own learning and taking responsibility for their own progress is participation in cultural change."

Both reports are published in a 60-page Executive Summary version and in a 160-plus-page full report version. These are available from the Adult Literacy Contact Centre while supplies last. In B.C. phone: 1-800-663-1293.

Literacy in Motion: A Guide to Inclusive Literacy Education

This 32-page guide presents ideas and suggestions about program delivery and instructional methods to successfully include adults with an intellectual disability in literacy programs.

The guide is published by the Roeher Institute, a national institute for the study of public policy affecting persons with an intellectual impairment and other disabilities.

A previous study by the Roeher Institute in 1990, *Literacy and Labels*, found that a wide range of barriers has traditionally

excluded adults with an intellectual disability from participating in literacy education.

Literacy in Motion examines the critical components of an inclusive literacy program and illustrates anecdotally the ways in which different types of program models can meet the needs of the intellectually disabled. Key factors identified by the guide include:

- ❖ The provision of personal supports. These might include emotional and motivational support, as well as physical supports such as assistance during mealtimes or assistance using the washroom or turning the pages of a book.
- ❖ Tutor training that promotes positive tutor attitudes regarding the abilities of people with disabilities.
- ❖ Outreach to prospective students in the community, many of whom expect their educational goals to go unrealized.

The guide is \$18.00 plus \$2.00 shipping and handling, and 7% GST. Copies can be ordered from:

Fitzhenry and Whiteside
185 Allstate Parkway
Markham, Ontario
L3R 4T8
Phone: (905) 477-2499
Fax: (905) 477-9179 □

BA in Adult Education Offered in Fraser Valley

A new Bachelor of Arts Degree in Adult Education program will be offered through the University College of the Fraser Valley (UCFV) and the Open Learning Agency (OLA) this fall.

"The trend towards lifelong learning has created a growing demand for instructors who specialize in teaching adults, and for educational program planners and administrators," says Susan Witter, Dean of Continuing Education of UCFV.

The UCFV/OLA degree program is designed to recognize prior learning, and to build on and enhance the applicant's current knowledge and skills.

The prior learning assessment system "... evaluates learning and grants credits to students who have achieved a level of learning that is equivalent to that which would normally be acquired through formal study at the post-secondary level."

Prior learning can include on-the-job experience, independent reading, hobbies, volunteer work, travel or artistic pursuits.

A maximum of 30 credits will be awarded for prior learning.

The program is designed primarily for people already involved in the education and training of adults, although those who have career aspirations in this field are also welcome to inquire.

Offered initially on a part-time basis at the UCFV Abbotsford campus, the program includes weekend, evening and intensive week-long classes.

For further information, contact:

BA Adult Education Program Advisor
University College of the Fraser Valley
Abbotsford Campus
33844 King Road
Abbotsford, B.C.
V2S 4N2
Phone: 854-4538, local 4382 ☐

Change Notice

Newsletter readers -- Please use this form to keep us updated on your wishes and whereabouts. Thanks for your assistance.

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- ☐ Please add me to the mailing list ☐ Other _____

Name: _____ Job title: _____

Organization: _____

Address: _____

_____ Postal code: _____

Phone: _____ Fax: _____

Mail or fax to: Adult Literacy Contact Centre Newsletter

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